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Security Council

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Draft resolution

The Security Council,

Reaffirming all its previous resolutions on the question of Western Sahara,

Having considered the report of the Secretary-General of 5 November 1996 (S/1996/913),

Reaffirming its commitment to assist the parties to achieve a just and lasting solution to the question of Western Sahara,

Welcoming the reiteration by the Kingdom of Morocco of its commitment to the Settlement Plan,

Welcoming also the reiteration by the Polisario Front of its commitment to the Settlement Plan,

Stressing the importance it attaches to the maintenance of the ceasefire, as an integral part of the Settlement Plan,

Stressing also the importance and usefulness of the resumption of exploratory talks between the parties, without prejudice to their respective positions, in order to create an atmosphere of mutual confidence conducive to a speedy and effective implementation of the Settlement Plan,

Reiterating that, for progress to be achieved, the parties must have a vision of the post-referendum period,

Noting the completion by the Secretary-General of reductions in the various components of the United Nations Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara (MINURSO),

1. Reiterates its commitment to the holding, as soon as possible, of a free, fair and impartial referendum for the self-determination of the people of Western Sahara in accordance with the Settlement Plan;

2. Supports the activities of the Acting Special Representative in continuing the dialogue with the parties and the two neighbouring countries and

in facilitating, in the context of the Settlement Plan, other efforts to set the parties on a course towards an agreed formula for the resolution of their differences, and requests that those activities be accelerated and that the parties continue to cooperate with the Acting Special Representative;

3. Notes the beneficial effect of demonstrations of goodwill and of all contacts aimed at achieving the implementation of the Settlement Plan;

4. Welcomes the steps taken by the parties to demonstrate goodwill, including the release of prisoners, and the recent indications that the parties are moving forward in their efforts to resolve outstanding questions concerning the implementation of the Settlement Plan, and encourages them to pursue these efforts so as to build confidence between themselves and to facilitate the implementation of the Settlement Plan;

5. Welcomes also the ongoing activities of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and the cooperation afforded to it by the parties and encourages UNHCR to pursue its humanitarian work and assistance in accordance with its mandate and the Settlement Plan;

6. Decides to extend the mandate of MINURSO, on the basis proposed by the Secretary-General in his report of 5 November 1996, until 31 May 1997;

7. Requests the Secretary-General to continue his efforts with the parties to break the impasse blocking the implementation of the Settlement Plan, and to submit an interim report to the Council by 28 February 1997 on the outcome of his efforts;

8. Also requests that in his next report the Secretary-General propose alternative steps, in the framework of the Settlement Plan, should there be no meaningful progress towards removing the obstacles to the implementation of the Plan;

9. Further requests the Secretary-General to continue to keep the staffing size and configuration of the various components of MINURSO under active review in order to ensure maximum efficiency and effectiveness, and to include in his next report ways to achieve this aim;

10. Also requests the Secretary-General to keep the Council closely informed of all significant developments, including their humanitarian aspects, and to submit a comprehensive report on the implementation of this resolution by 9 May 1997;

11. Decides to remain seized of the matter.